

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action mailed December 19, 2001, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration. In order to further the prosecution of this application, amendments have been made in the specification and the claims, and the following remarks are submitted.

Claims 1-8, 10, 12-22, 24, 27-31, 35, and 40-120 are now pending in this application, of which claims 1, 2, 15, 30, 68, 90 and 98 are independent claims. Claims 1-3, 5-8, 10, 12-22, 24, 27-31 and 35 are amended herein. Claims 9, 11, 23, 25, 26, 32-34 and 36-39 have been canceled, and claims 40-120 have been added. The application as presented is believed to be in allowable condition.

Attached hereto are marked-up versions of the changes made to the abstract, specification and to the claims by the current amendment. The attached pages are captioned **“MARKED-UP SPECIFICATION”** and **“MARKED-UP CLAIMS,”** respectively.

A. Objection to the Abstract

The Office Action states that the Abstract was objected to because it is too long. Applicants have amended the Abstract such that it now does not exceed 150 words in length, as specified in the MPEP § 608.01(b). Withdrawal of this objection is therefore respectfully requested.

B. Objection to Claims 3-14

The Office Action states that claims 3-14 were objected to under 37 C.F.R. 1.75(c) as being in improper form because any multiply dependent claim must refer to the claims from which it depends in the alternative only. Claim 3 has been amended to recite “as claimed in either one of claims 1 and 2,” and thus now only refers to claims 1 and 2 in the alternative. Claim 3 as amended complies with 37 C.F.R. 1.75(c), and withdrawal of the objection of claim 3 and claims 4-8 and 10 and 12-14 which depend from claim 3, is therefore respectfully requested.

C. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, First Paragraph

Claims 30-39 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph. The Office Action states that according to claim 30, the information is provided along a signal pathway, but that according to the specification, the information is provided along a pathway traversed by the

movable platforms. Applicants do not agree that the specification is not enabling with respect to the signal pathway recited in claim 30. However, claim 30 has been amended to remove the language “along a signal pathway.” Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 30, 31 and 35 is therefore respectfully requested. Claims 32-34 and 36-39 have been canceled, and thus the rejection is moot with regard to these claims.

D. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph

Claims 30-39 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph as failing to set forth the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. Applicants believe that claim 30, including the term “signal pathway,” would be clearly understood by one of skill in the art. However, claim 30 has been amended to remove the language “along a signal pathway.” Claim 30, as amended, and thus claims 31 and 35 which depend therefrom, now satisfy the statute. Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 30, 31 and 35 is therefore respectfully requested. Claims 32-34 and 36-39 have been canceled, and thus the rejection is moot with regard to these claims.

Claim 2 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph for being indefinite for failing to point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. The Office Action states that according to claim 2, a signal network does not exist between the at least one movable platform and a destination, and that it is unclear whether it is intended that no signal network exist between these points or that a specific network does not exist between these points. Claim 2 has been amended to remove the reference to a signal network and to recite “from at least one passenger vehicle located on pathway and not within a signal coverage area of a destination.” This amendment is for the purpose of clarification and is not a narrowing amendment. Claim 2, as amended, satisfies the statute. Withdrawal of the rejection of claim 2 is therefore respectfully requested.

E. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 1, 15-17, 19-25, 29-36, 38 and 39 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,530,909 to Simon et al. (hereinafter Simon). Applicants have amended claims 1, 2, 15, and 30 to further distinguish over Simon, and respectfully traverse the rejection.

Simon discloses a method of transmitting information between an emitting station and a receiving station separated by a distance exceeding the range of direct communication of the stations. The method includes equipping aerodynes (e.g., aircraft) with open HF or VHF transmission relays that permanently exchange information with relays momentarily within their range in order to pass the information from relay to relay from an emitting station to a destination (col. 1, lines 50-67 and col. 2, lines 1-2). According to Simon, the positions occupied by the aircraft are schematically represented in FIG. 1 by arrows, but the distribution of the aircraft within the airspace will change from one instant to another in an almost random manner, seen from the system (col. 2, lines 43-47). Simon's method is a one-way, momentary interconnection method. Simon discloses that each aircraft is equipped with a VHF transceiver and a processing unit capable of receiving routing information and messages to be relayed (col. 2, lines 48-49, col. 3, line 14). The relays each implement a route selection algorithm to determine a best route for each message (col. 5, lines 8-14). Simon further discloses that the method could also combine stationary relay systems installed on the ground or satellite relay systems with the relays on the aerodynes (col. 5, lines 29-32). Simon thus discloses a one-way (simplex) method and system of communication using HF or VHF frequency band and low data rate, burst transmission.

By contrast, Applicants have developed a two-way (full duplex) communication system for long duration, high data rate communication between passenger vehicles. In some embodiments, the passenger vehicles are located on pathways (claimed in claims 1-8, 10-22, 24, 27-31, 35, 40-89, 91-94, 101, 104, 105, 107, 108, 110-112 and 114), and in some embodiments the information signal is transmitted, using a directional antenna, along a pathway on which the passenger vehicles are located (claimed in claims 1-8, 10, 12, 22, 24, 27-29, 40-44, 49-67, 84, 86, 91-94, 107, 108, 110 and 111). Additionally, in some embodiments, the information signal may be presented to passengers associated with the passenger vehicles (claimed in claims 45, 49, 54-56, 59, 85 and 90-120). These features are neither disclosed nor suggested by Simon.

In particular, Applicants' claim 1, as amended, recites "receiving the information with a first transmitter/receiver unit located on a passenger vehicle that...is located on the pathway and re-transmitting the information signal," wherein the "information signal is transmitted from the first transmitter/receiver unit to the receiver along the pathway." By contrast, Simon makes absolutely no mention of the aerodynes being on pathways, but rather discloses that the

“distribution of the aircraft within the airspace will change from one instant to another in an almost random manner,” which suggests that the aerodynes are not located on fixed and known pathways. In addition, Simon discloses that the aerodynes implement a routing algorithm which determines a best route for the signal. Even if one were to assume that the aerodynes are on pathways, which is not disclosed or suggested by Simon, the route for the signal, as illustrated in Simon’s FIG. 1, is not along the pathway on which the passenger vehicles are located, as is claimed in Applicants’ claim 1, but usually at an angle to the pathway. Therefore, because Simon neither discloses nor suggests all the features of Applicants’ claim 1, claim 1 is not anticipated by Simon. Withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1 is thus respectfully requested.

Similarly, Applicants’ claim 15, as amended, recites “a transmitter/receiver unit located on a passenger vehicle that is located on a pathway” and “a directional antenna, coupled to the transmitter/receiver unit, that re-transmits the information signal along the pathway.” As discussed above, Simon is completely silent with respect to the vehicles being on pathways. Furthermore, Simon discloses that each aerodyne is equipped with a VHF transceiver whose radio range is represented by a circle (col. 2, lines 48-51), and is thus omni-directional. Simon therefore does not disclose or suggest a directional antenna coupled to the transmitter/receiver unit, as is claimed in Applicants’ claim 15. Therefore, because Simon neither discloses nor suggests all the features of Applicants’ claim 15, claim 15 is not anticipated by Simon. Withdrawal of the rejection of claim 15 is thus respectfully requested.

Applicants’ claim 30 recites “transmitting an information signal...to a transmitter/receiver unit located on a first passenger vehicle located on a first predetermined pathway.” As discussed above, Simon fails to make any mention of the vehicles being located on a predetermined pathway, and thus does not anticipate claim 30. Withdrawal of the rejection of claim 30 is therefore respectfully requested.

Claims 23, 25, 32-34 and 36-39 have been cancelled and the rejection is thus moot with respect to these claims.

Dependent claims 16, 17, 19-22, 24, 29-31 and 35 depend, either directly or indirectly, from one of the independent claims 1, 15 and 30. Therefore, each of the dependant claims is allowable for the same reasons as discussed for its respective base claims. Therefore, Applicants believe that it is unnecessary at this time to argue the allowability of each of the dependant claims individually. However, Applicants do not necessarily agree with the interpretation of the

dependant claims as set forth in the Office Action, and reserve the right to argue the patentability of each dependant claim at a later time, if deemed necessary. Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 16, 17, 19-22, 24, 29-31 and 35 is thus respectfully requested.

F. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

Claims 1, 15, 16 and 30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,880,693 to Drummer (hereinafter Drummer). Applicants have amended claims 1, 15 and 30 to further distinguish over Drummer, and respectfully traverse the rejection.

Drummer discloses a wireless exchange of information between a first station, fixed to a missile, and a second station, preferably stationary, through an intermediary relay station which is positioned high above the first and second stations (col. 3, lines 10-30). According to Drummer, antenna tracking in relation to the relay station is effected by taking account of the items of locational information for the relay station and the transmitting or receiving stations (col. 3, lines 60-64). The current directional information relating to the relay station is ascertained on board the missile station in a processor using instantaneous locational data, obtained from a receiver and antenna on board the missile station, and a known geostationary position of the relay station carried in a memory of the processor (col. 4, lines 47-58). The current directional information from the missile station to the relay station is used to electronically pivot the missile antenna such that the main direction of sensitivity thereof is always exactly directed to the instantaneous relative location of the relay station (col. 5, lines 1-6).

As discussed above, Applicants' claim 1 recites "receiving the information with a first transmitter/receiver unit located on a passenger vehicle that...is located on the pathway and re-transmitting the information signal," wherein the "information signal is transmitted from the first transmitter/receiver unit to the receiver along the pathway." Drummer fails to disclose or suggest all the features of Applicants' claim 1. Neither the missile station nor the satellite disclosed in Drummer are passenger vehicles, as is required by Applicants' claim 1. Furthermore, if the geostationary orbit of the satellite relay station in Drummer is considered to be pathway, the signal is not transmitted along the pathway as is claimed in Applicants' claim 1. Therefore, for at least these reasons, Applicants; claim 1 patentably distinguishes over Drummer, and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1 is respectfully requested.

Similarly, Applicants' claim 15 recites "a transmitter/receiver unit located on a passenger vehicle that is located on a pathway" and "a directional antenna, coupled to the transmitter/receiver unit, that re-transmits the information signal along the pathway." As discussed above in reference to claim 1, neither the missile station nor the satellite relay station disclosed in Drummer are passenger vehicles, and the information signal is not transmitted along the pathway on which the passenger vehicles are located. Therefore, because Drummer fails to disclose or suggest all the features of Applicants' claim 15, claim 15 is not anticipated by Drummer. Withdrawal of the rejection of claim 15 is thus respectfully requested.

Claim 16 depends from claim 15 and is therefore allowable for at least the same reasons as discussed for claim 15.

Claim 30 similarly recites "transmitting an information signal...to a transmitter/receiver unit located on a first passenger vehicle located on a first predetermined pathway." Since Drummer fails to disclose or suggest a passenger vehicle, as is claimed in Applicants' claim 30, Drummer does not anticipate claim 30. Withdrawal of the rejection of claim 30 is therefore respectfully requested.

G. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 18 and 28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Simon in view of U.S. Patent No. to Rootsey et al. (hereinafter Rootsey). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Rootsey discloses a technique for supplementing a paging system that uses existing radio stations as repeaters for a primary message delivery. According to Rootsey, a miniature repeater station is located on a vehicle that is expected to carry multiple pagers. The miniature repeater is equipped with a satellite receiver that receives paging messages broadcast by satellites, and re-broadcasts the messages to pagers located on or in the vicinity of the vehicle (col. 2, lines 15-26). Rootsey discloses that, in order to avoid interference with other radio transmitters operating outside the system, the miniature repeater is enabled only when the vehicle is outside the range of other terrestrial stations. The miniature repeater includes a scanning receiver that samples the radio band and enables the rebroadcast of signals only if no other radiating FM stations are detected in the area of the vehicle (abstract). Rootsey discloses that preferably the miniature repeater only rebroadcasts the paging message as an FM subcarrier signal (col. 2, lines 56-57).

Claims 18 and 28 depend indirectly from claim 15 and thus include all the limitations of claim 15. As discussed above, Simon fails to disclose or suggest several features of claim 15. In particular, Simon fails to disclose or suggest “a transmitter/receiver unit located on a passenger vehicle that is located on a pathway” and “a directional antenna, coupled to the transmitter/receiver unit, that re-transmits the information signal along the pathway,” as is claimed in Applicants’ claim 15. Rootsey fails to cure the deficiencies of Simon, and thus, although Applicants do not necessarily agree that the combination of Simon and Rootsey suggested in the Office Action is proper, the combination fails to disclose or suggest all the features of Applicants’ claim 15. Therefore, claim 15, and thus claims 18 and 28 which depend therefrom, patentably distinguish over the combination of Simon and Rootsey suggested in the Office Action, and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 26, 27 and 37 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Simon in view of Drummer. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Claims 26 and 37 have been cancelled and thus the rejection is moot with regard to claims 26 and 37.

Claim 27 depends indirectly from claim 15, and thus includes all the features of claim 15. As discussed above, Simon fails to disclose or suggest all the features of Applicants’ claim 15. Similarly, Drummer fails to cure the deficiencies of Simon. In particular, neither Simon nor Drummer disclose or suggest a directional antenna coupled to a transmitter/receiver unit that re-transmits the information signal along the pathway on which the vehicles are located. Therefore, although Applicants do not necessarily agree that the combination of Simon and Drummer suggested in the Office Action is proper, claim 15 patentably distinguishes over any such combination for at least the reason discussed above. Therefore claim 27 which depends from claim 15 likewise distinguishes over the combination, and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 27 is respectfully requested.

H. Newly Added Claims

New claims 40-120 have been added to further define the Applicants’ contribution to the art. These claims are supported by the specification as filed, and no new subject matter has been added.

New claim 68 recites “a system that provides information to and from passenger vehicles, the system comprising...a first transmitter/receiver unit located on a first passenger vehicle located on a first predetermined pathway...a second transmitter/receiver unit located on a second passenger vehicle... and a receiver located on a third passenger vehicle located on a second predetermined pathway.” As discussed above, the art of record does not disclose or suggest transfer of an information signal between passenger vehicles located on predetermined pathways, as is claimed in new claim 68. Therefore, claim 68 distinguishes over the art of record, and is condition for allowance.

New claim 90 recites “a method for providing information from a source to a second passenger vehicle...comprising...providing the information for access by a passenger associated with the first passenger vehicle...and providing the information for access by a passenger associated with the second passenger vehicle.” The art of record does not disclose or suggest a method of providing information between passenger vehicles, as is claimed in new claim 90, and in particular, does not disclose or suggest providing the information for access by a passenger associated with either of the first and second passenger vehicles. Therefore, new claim 90 patentably distinguishes over the art of record and is in condition for allowance.

New claim 98 recites a communication system...comprising...a first passenger interface adapted to present the information for access by a passenger...and a second passenger interface.” The art of record does not disclose or suggest first and second passenger interfaces that are adapted to present the information for access by passengers associated with the first and second passenger vehicles, respectively, as is claimed in new claim 98. Therefore, new claim 98 patentably distinguishes over the art of record and is in condition for allowance.

New dependent claims 40-67, 69-89, 91-97 and 99-120 depend either directly or indirectly from one of independent claims 1, 2, 15, 30, 68, 90 and 98, and thus each of the new dependant claims is allowable for the same reasons as discussed for its respective base claims. Therefore, Applicants believe that it is unnecessary at this time to argue the allowability of each of the dependant claims individually. However, Applicants reserve the right to argue the patentability of each dependant claim at a later time, if deemed necessary.

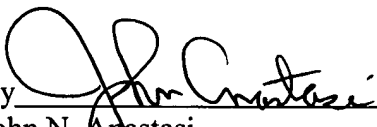
CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, this application should now be in condition for allowance. A notice to this effect is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes, after this amendment, that the application is not in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the Applicants' attorney at the number listed below.

If this response is not considered timely filed and if a request for an extension of time is otherwise absent, Applicant hereby requests any necessary extension of time. If there is a fee occasioned by this response, including an extension fee, that is not covered by an enclosed check, please charge any deficiency to deposit account No.23/2825.

Respectfully submitted,

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Attorney's Docket No.: A00602/70002

Dated: April 19, 2002

x04/19/02

MARKED-UP SPECIFICATION

The paragraph beginning at page 1 line 5 has been amended as follows:

This application claims priority under 35 U.S.C. §119(e)(1) to Provisional Application Serial No. [60/23,235,796] 60/235,796, entitled, "Micro-Communications Methodology and System for Mobile Platforms," filed on September 27, 2000, and claims priority under 35 U.S.C. §120 to commonly-owned, co-pending U.S. Application Serial No. 09/382,969, entitled, "Low-Height, Low-Cost, High-Gain Antenna and System [of] for Mobile Platforms," filed on September 17, 1999; which claims priority under 35 U.S.C. §120 to U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 08/932,190, "In Flight Video Apparatus and Method," filed on September 17, 1997 and issued on October 26, 1999 as U.S. Patent No. 5,973,647. Each of these applications is herein incorporated by reference in its entirety.

The paragraph beginning at page 28 line 2 has been amended as follows:

A communication system and methodology for providing a signal of interest to at least one movable platform, for possible use by passengers associated with the movable platform, from an information source, where the movable platform is not within a signal coverage area of the information source. The method includes [steps of] transmitting an information signal [containing information] with a transmitter located at the information source, receiving the information with a first transmitter/receiver unit located on a first movable platform [that is] within the signal coverage of the information source, and re-transmitting the information signal with the transmitter/receiver unit to a receiver located on a second movable platform that is not within the signal coverage area of the information source. The method may further include repeating the steps of receiving and re-transmitting the information signal [along a signal path] with at least one additional transmitter/receiver unit [located on a third movable platform], to provide the information signal between the first movable platform and the second movable platform. [The system comprises an information source, including a transmitter that transmits the information signal, a transmitter/receiver unit located on a first movable platform that receives and re-transmits the information signal, and a destination that includes a receiver that

receives the information signal. The system may also include at least one additional transmitter/receiver, located on a second movable platform, that receives and re-transmits the information signal to provide the information signal between the first movable platform and the destination.]

MARKED-UP CLAIMS

Claims 1-3, 5-8, 10, 12-22, 24, 27-31 and 35 have been amended as follows:

1. (Amended) A method of providing information to at least one [movable platform] passenger vehicle located on a pathway in an area where signal coverage is not available from an information source, to create an information network, the method comprising steps of:

transmitting an information signal containing the information with a transmitter located at the information source;

receiving the information signal with a first transmitter/receiver unit located on a [movable platform] passenger vehicle that is within a signal coverage area of the information source and that is located on the pathway; and

re-transmitting the information signal with the first transmitter/receiver unit to a receiver located on the at least one [movable platform] passenger vehicle located on the pathway;

wherein the information signal is transmitted from the first transmitter/receiver unit to the receiver along the pathway.

2. (Amended) A method of providing information from at least one [movable platform] passenger vehicle located on a pathway and not within a signal coverage area of [in an area where a signal network does not exist between the at least one movable platform and] a destination, the method comprising steps of:

transmitting an information signal containing the information with a transmitter located on the at least one [movable platform] passenger vehicle on the pathway;

receiving the information signal with a first transmitter/receiver unit located on a [movable platform] passenger vehicle, located on the pathway, that is within [a] the signal coverage area of the destination; and

re-transmitting the information signal with the first transmitter/receiver unit to a receiver located at the destination;

wherein the information signal is transmitted from the transmitter to the first transmitter/receiver unit along the pathway.

3. (Amended) The method as claimed in either one of claims 1 and 2, further comprising repeating the steps of receiving and re-transmitting the information signal along [a signal path] the pathway with an additional transmitter/receiver unit to provide the information signal between the first transmitter/receiver unit and the at least one [movable platform] passenger vehicle.

5. (Amended) The method as claimed in claim 3, wherein the additional transmitter/receiver unit is located on [a movable platform] another passenger vehicle located on the pathway.

6. (Amended) The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein at least two of the [movable platforms] passenger vehicles are located on [a] the pathway and are travelling in the same direction.

7. (Amended) The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein at least two of the [movable platforms] passenger vehicles are located on [a] the pathway and are travelling in [the] opposite [direction] directions.

8. (Amended) The method as claimed in claim [5] 3, wherein [at least two of] the [movable platforms] additional transmitter/receiver unit is located on another passenger vehicle that is [are] located on a parallel [pathways and are travelling in the same direction] pathway.

10. (Amended) The method as claimed in claim [5] 3, wherein [at least two of] the [movable platforms] additional transmitter/receiver unit is located on another passenger vehicle [are] located on [pathways] a second pathway that [intersect] intersects the pathway[, and at least one of the two movable platform is travelling towards the intersection].

12. (Amended) The method as claimed in claim [5] 3, wherein [at least one of movable platforms] the additional transmitter/receiver unit is located on another passenger vehicle that is not located on a pathway.

13. (Amended) The method as claimed in claim 5, [wherein at least two of the movable platforms are located on a pathway, and] further comprising a step of monitoring the [movable platforms] passenger vehicles and information signals along the pathway with a pathway station.

14. (Amended) The method as claimed in claim 5, further including a step of providing the information signal to [a movable platform] the at least one passenger vehicle located in an area where there is an insufficient number of available [movable platforms] passenger vehicles to provide [a] the information signal, with a supplemental communication system.

15. (Amended) A system that provides information to and from a [destination] second passenger vehicle which is in an area where signal coverage is otherwise not available from an information source, comprising:

[the information source including] a transmitter unit, located at the information source, that transmits the information signal;

a first transmitter/receiver unit located on a [movable platform] first passenger vehicle that is located on a pathway within a signal coverage area of the information source, that receives the information signal and that re-transmits the information signal;

a directional antenna, coupled to the transmitter/receiver unit that re-transmits the information signal along the pathway; and

[the destination] a receiver, located on the second passenger vehicle that is located on the pathway, the receiver adapted to receive [including a receiver that receives] the information signal.

16. (Amended) The system as claimed in claim 15, wherein the [transmitter/receiver unit is located on a the movable platform] first passenger vehicle is located on the pathway and in an area where there is an already existing communication channel.

17. (Amended) The system as claimed in claim 15, further including:

[at least one] an additional transmitter/receiver unit located on [a movable platform] another passenger vehicle, that receives and re-transmits the information signal to provide the

information signal between the information source and the [destination] second passenger vehicle; and

wherein the additional transmitter/receiver unit includes an additional directional antenna that re-transmits the information signal along the pathway.

18. (Amended) The system as claimed in claim 17, wherein the [movable platforms] passenger vehicles are ground vehicles.

19. (Amended) The system as claimed in claim 17, wherein the [movable platforms] passenger vehicles are aircraft.

20. (Amended) The system as claimed in claim 17, wherein at least two of the [movable platforms] passenger vehicles [are located on a pathway and] are travelling in the same direction along the pathway.

21. (Amended) The system as claimed in claim 17, wherein at least two of the [movable platforms] passenger vehicles [are located on a pathway and] are travelling in opposite directions along the pathway.

22. (Amended) The system as claimed in claim 17, wherein at least two of the [movable platforms] passenger vehicles [are] located on parallel pathways[and are travelling in the same direction].

24. (Amended) The system as claimed in claim 17, wherein [at least two of the movable platforms] the another passenger vehicle is [are] located on [pathways] a second pathway that [intersect] intersects the pathway[, and at least one of the movable platforms is travelling towards the intersection].

27. (Amended) The system as claimed in claim 17, wherein [at least one of the movable platforms] the another passenger vehicle is not located on a pathway.

28. (Amended) The system as claimed in claim 17, further comprising a supplemental communication network that communicates directly with [a movable platform] the second passenger vehicle that is located in an area where there are insufficient [movable platforms] other passenger vehicles available to provide [a] the information signal to the [movable platform] second passenger vehicle.

29. (Amended) The system as claimed in claim 17, further comprising:
at least one pathway station that monitors the [movable platforms] passenger vehicles along [a] the pathway; and
a pathway control station, coupled to the pathway station and to an existing communications network, that controls communication between the pathway station and the existing communication network.

30. (Amended) A method of providing information to [movable platforms] passenger vehicles [along a signal pathway], comprising steps of:
transmitting an information signal containing the information from an information source to a first transmitter/receiver unit located on a first [movable platform] passenger vehicle located on a first predetermined pathway;
receiving the information signal with the first transmitter/receiver unit; [and]
re-transmitting the information signal with the first transmitter/receiver unit [to];
repeating the steps of receiving and re-transmitting the information signal with another transmitter/receiver unit located on a third passenger vehicle; and
receiving the information signal with a receiver that is located on a second [movable platform] passenger vehicle located on a second predetermined pathway.

31. (Amended) The method as claimed in claim 30, wherein the first and second [movable platforms] passenger vehicles are located on the first and second predetermined pathways, which are parallel pathways [and are travelling in the same direction].

35. (Amended) The method as claimed in claim 30, wherein the first and second [movable platforms] passenger vehicles are located on the first and second predetermined pathways, which are pathways that intersect[, and at least one of the first and second movable platforms is travelling towards the intersection].